

Fire and emergency services

Vancouver's fire and emergency services in 2003

The Vancouver Fire Department (VFD) provides fire protection and emergency services within the Vancouver city limits and the eastern two-thirds of the unincorporated VUGA. This unincorporated area is currently in Clark County Fire District #5, which contracts with VFD to provide fire and emergency services. The western remainder of the VUGA is served by Fire District #6, which is addressed in the *Clark County Capital Facilities Plan*. See **Figure 5-15**.

Beginning in 1994, the VFD and Fire District #5 consolidated operations, with Vancouver contracted as lead agency for the provision of all fire fighting, fire prevention, emergency medical response, and other fire department services, throughout the 98-square-mile area of both districts. This consolidated fire department is the largest in the region and fourth largest in the state, serving over 210,000 people, mostly within the VUGA.

In addition to traditional fire suppression services, the consolidated operation provides basic and advanced emergency life support medical services, code enforcement, hazardous materials and disaster response, plan review, and public education. District #5 also operates the regional fire training center.

The consolidated fire department currently has ten fire stations. Eight are staffed by full-time personnel and two by volunteers. Vehicular equipment includes trucks (with ladders and equipment), engines (pumps and hoses), one specialized medic vehicle, and support vehicles such as command cars and water tanker trucks.



Photo by Mick Foy

During 2002, emergency medical calls accounted for approximately 82 percent of total emergency call responses in the VFD service area during 2002, up from 77 percent in 1994 (**Table 5-16**). These services are supplied by fire personnel who are cross-trained as emergency medical technicians and paramedics as well as firefighters. Non-emergency and critical care transport of the sick and injured is performed by private ambulance providers regulated by Clark County.

Service standards

The *Vancouver Fire Department Comprehensive Plan* (1997) established that the average response time to an emergency call should be five minutes or less for at least 90 percent of Vancouver's population.

The current service standard for fire protection and emergency medical services (EMS) is based on:

- response time and call volume
- number and location of fire stations
- number of emergency response vehicles

Table 5-16. Fire and EMS calls per station (V = volunteer).

Station	81*	82*	83	84	85*	86	87 (V)	88	89	810 (V)	Total
Calls/Station 1994	1,686	2,197	1,314	1,933	1,110	1,572	252	1,131	851	17	12,063
Calls/Station 2002	2,851	2,912	2,254	3,458	1,942	2,374	625	1,574	2,158	90	20,238

*Stations 81, 82, and 85 have 2 response units each.
 Sources: 1997 *Vancouver Fire Department Comprehensive Plan* and VFD, 2002.

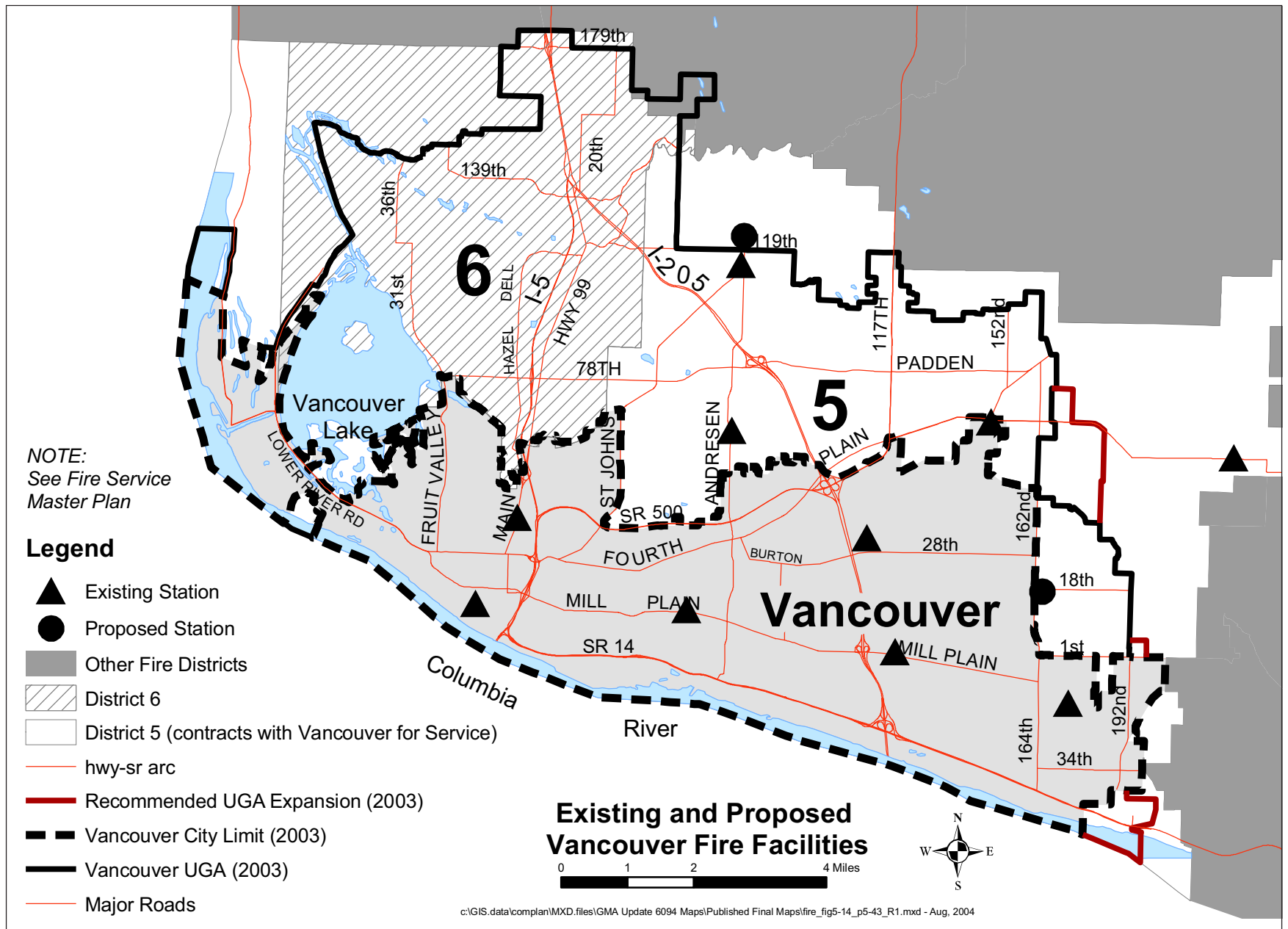


Figure 5-15. Existing and proposed Vancouver fire facilities. Source: City of Vancouver GIS.

- number of trained personnel
- traffic patterns and vehicle or pedestrian congestion
- type of structure or emergency

In projecting future need, fire and EMS providers consider a variety of factors. In station areas currently served by career firefighters, 3,000 calls per engine company annually is the standard by which the need for additional engine companies within existing station areas is measured. In station areas primarily served by volunteer firefighters, an average population density greater than 1,000 persons per square mile is the standard by which the need for assigning professional staff to existing fire stations is measured. **Table 5-17** lists minimum staffing requirements.

Table 5-17. Minimum staffing requirements for fire emergency response vehicles.

Engine (pumper)	1 company officer and 2 firefighters, one of whom is also a paramedic
Truck (ladder)	1 company officer and 3 firefighters, one of whom is also a paramedic
All company officers and firefighters are certified to at least the EMT level; many are certified as paramedics.	

The Washington Survey and Rating Bureau rates fire protection services using a variety of criteria including staffing levels, equipment, training, and response times. The insurance industry uses the rating to determine premiums.

On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the best, Vancouver currently has a Class 4 rating.

Response times. A high number of emergency calls was the most significant cause of response delays during 2002, with traffic congestion and traffic calming devices also contributing to delays. In addition, the level of equipment and staffing has not changed significantly in the last nine years except for the recent addition of paramedic personnel to staff the new Medic 84 response unit. Coordinated EMS standards adopted by both the City (VMC 5.84) and the County (CCC 5.48A), and implemented through interlocal agreements, established response time goals for emergency medical responses in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Current re-

sponse times do not yet meet the 90 percent compliance goal. Additional vehicle, facility and staffing enhancements, as identified in the *VFD Business Plan* (2001), coupled with planned improvements to the transportation system, are focused on

achieving the 90 percent standard by 2009.

Table 5-18 lists fire and EMS response time standards.

Table 5-18. Fire and EMS response time standards.

Service	Geographic area	Response time goal	Percentage meeting response time goal			
			1994	2002	2009 (projected)	2023 (projected)
Fire	Urban	Within 5 minutes	48%	54%	90%	90%
	Suburban	Within 6 minutes	53%	43%	90%	90%
	Rural	Within 8 minutes	65%	63%	90%	90%
EMS	Urban	Within 5 minutes	57%	51%	90%	90%
	Suburban	Within 6 minutes	67%	38%	90%	90%
	Rural	Within 8 minutes	76%	60%	90%	90%

Source: Vancouver Fire Department, 2002

Table 5-19. VFD service statistics and projections including District #5.

	1994	2002	2009 est.**	2023 est.**
Total calls (fire and medical)	12,126	20, 238	27,593	43,020
EMS calls	9,328	16,677	23,115	36,780
EMS percentage of all calls	77%	82%	84%	86%
Total calls per 1,000 people	84	89	100	105
Total calls per square mile	124	203	251	344
Average response time in minutes	5:09	4:57	Under 5:00	Under 5:00
Professional fire personnel	130	159	190	250
Calls/professional staff	93	125	145	172
Volunteer firefighters	40	10	30	0
ISO Fire Insurance Rating (1 is best)	3	4	Goal = 2	Goal = 2

Sources: VFD, 2003; *VFD Business Plan* (2001).

** *Vancouver Fire Department Comprehensive Plan* (1997).

Direction for the future

The VFD estimates a 3.5 percent increase per year in fire calls and a 6 percent increase per year in emergency calls between 2002 and 2023 in its service area, including Fire District #5. The number and type of calls received from a specific area is influenced by several factors:

- increases in population and density
- number of aging structures that have not had ongoing maintenance
- lower income levels that restrict the ability of residents and owners to maintain and repair their homes and businesses, resulting in greater fire risk
- number of senior, nursing and skilled care facilities
- increasing age of the baby boomer generation

Population density, number of emergency calls per station area, response times, and national standards developed by the Insurance Services Offices, Inc. (ISO) and the US Fire Administration are used to decide when to staff fire stations with career personnel, and when and where to build new fire stations. The need for additional response units (engines, trucks, etc.) is based on the same factors and on the number of

emergency calls per response unit. **Table 5-19** displays both historical and projected activity, based on growth estimates within existing service areas, and assumptions about population aging, increased urban densities, and future annexations to the City of Vancouver of areas outside of District #5, which would expand the combined service area. A 4.5 percent total growth rate was assumed to account for growth from both population and annexation.

The *VFD Business Plan* (2001) recommends replacing the two older volunteer staffed stations with new stations within the next 6 years, better located in relation to population and growth, and better able to house duty staff, in order to reduce response times. Construction cost is estimated at \$6,400,000. These stations will change from volunteer to professional staffing over time.

Emergency response vehicles. Vehicles are replaced between 5 and 20 years based on information regarding age, condition, and mileage. The fire department sets aside money each year for the eventual replacement of each vehicle. VFD has on-site maintenance facilities to keep its vehicles in service as long as possible.

Finance. The largest single investment the fire department makes is in people. In 2002, salaries and benefits accounted for \$13,744,547, services and supplies cost \$1,222,810, capital improvements (such as repairs to buildings over \$10,000) cost \$34,913, and equipment maintenance, operating expenses and replacement (such as apparatus, vehicles and equipment) cost \$1,319,085. As a department of the City, the VFD also paid “interfund” charges of \$2,217,900 for centralized services such as finance, purchasing, and human resources support. Total 2002 expenditures: \$18,539,255 (2003 VFD Financial Report). Through 2005 the VFD is budgeted to spend \$2,938,554 on facility and equipment upgrades, including major maintenance and remodel of existing facilities, and scheduled vehicle replacement.

Financial support for the VFD comes primarily from two sources: the City of Vancouver general fund and property tax revenues collected by Clark County Fire District #5 (\$1.50 per \$1,000 property tax for the fire district was approved by Fire District #5 voters in February 1993). All county fire districts will continue to face financial challenges from the impact of statewide property tax limitations, especially if the economy remains stagnant. This is a common problem for most urban fire districts in the State of Washington. The only relief appears to be legislation enacted at the state level.

Police

Vancouver’s police services in 2003

The Vancouver Police Department (VPD) provides police protection and other law enforcement services within Vancouver’s city limits. In 2003, the VPD consists of 182 sworn officers and 33 non-sworn support staff. The department is divided into 3 precincts and 14 patrol districts (**Figure 5-16**).

The VPD provides a range of services:

- emergency response
- 24-hour patrol
- traffic enforcement
- criminal investigations including arson
- forensics
- traffic collision investigations
- special response units such as canine officers, bike officers, and mounted patrol

In cooperation with other local agencies, VPD also provides police services related to child abuse, domestic violence, and drug enforcement and investigation. Clark County processes 911 calls, radio dispatch, and jail and criminal records.

Through interlocal agreements, all jurisdictions in Clark County provide backup to each other in emergencies. The Washington State Patrol has police jurisdiction on state routes in the county, is largely responsible for state facilities, and provides backup for the Clark County Sheriff’s Department and local jurisdictions.

Regional or shared law-enforcement and correctional facilities include the county jail, a leased office for the inter-jurisdictional Clark-Skamania Narcotics Task Force, the Child Abuse Intervention Center, and the Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency (CRESA), which directs 911 calls to the appropriate agency. CRESA also coordinates emergency management, provides oversight of ambulance contracts, and operates and maintains regional radio services.

In addition to the East and Central precinct station facilities, other facilities include a headquarters building and the former West precinct station, which provides facilities for evidence handling, storage, and case management. In place of a single precinct station for the westside, a number of locations throughout the precinct and in Downtown Vancouver have been set up for officers to meet with citizens and write reports.

As land is annexed to the City, the responsibil-

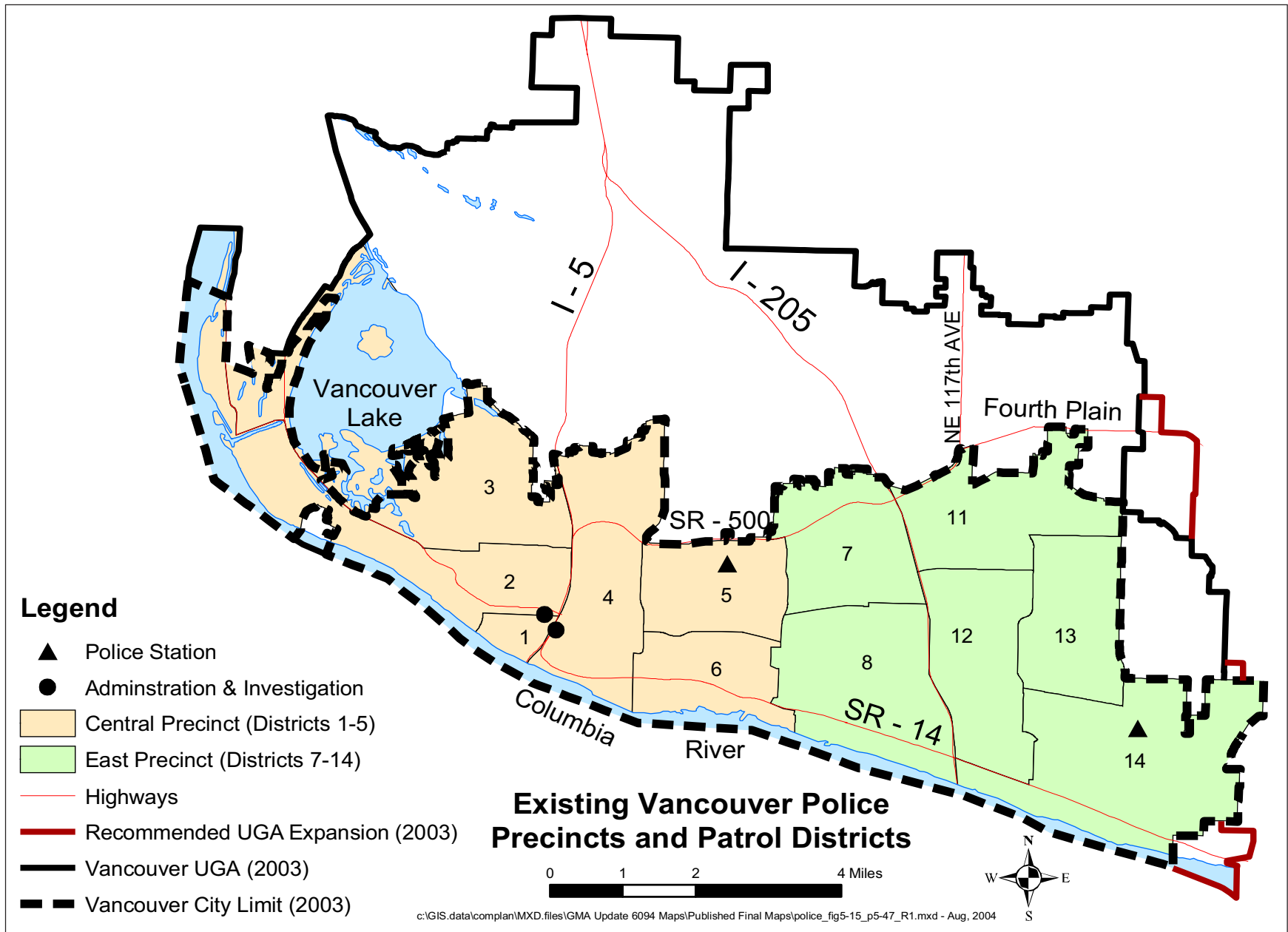


Figure 5-16. Vancouver's police precincts and patrol districts: City of Vancouver GIS.



ity for law enforcement in the formerly unincorporated areas will transfer from the Clark County Sheriff's Department to the VPD. Law-enforcement staffing is usually based on population and average response time to emergency calls. Vancouver's population has more than doubled since 1996, from approximately 67,450 to approximately 148,800 in 2002. **Table 5-20** summarizes statistics regarding Vancouver's police department staffing, crime rates, and response times for 1996 and 2002.

Service standards

Demand for law-enforcement services is related directly to population and employment. Most calls for police assistance come from residential areas, rather than from commercial areas or places of employment. Although staffing levels are determined according to population and emergency response time, residents and business owners care more about crime rates, preferring areas with low or declining rates. Crime rates are closely related to population, age distribution, and economic conditions. In 1996, there were 1.7 officers per 1,000 citizens, but by 2002, the number had fallen to just below 1.2. The current FBI standard is 1.6

for urban areas. The City's current goal is to maintain the 1.2 ratio.

Direction for the future

In 2002, the VPD prepared a comprehensive business plan to address the impacts of projected growth. Additional staffing, equipment, and facilities needed as the population continues to grow and land is annexed were identified. VPD's 2002 business plan addresses facility, staffing, program, and equipment needs resulting from projected growth in Vancouver's population, geographic area, and density.

Plans are based on current activity statistics, census demographic data, and information provided by the City's Long Range Planning Department.

Table 5-21 shows estimates of additional officers needed in 2009 and 2023, based on population projections for those years, utilizing both the existing ratio of 1.2 officers per 1,000 people and the FBI's standard of 1.6 officers per 1,000 people.

Although the primary impact of growth on the VPD will be the need for additional police officers, support staff, vehicles, and equipment, it will also be necessary to provide adequate facilities to house and support the additional staff and

Table 5-20. Change in VPD's staffing, crime rates, and response times for 1996 and 2002.

Category	1996	2002	Change
911 calls received	67, 667	104,582	+55.0%
Sworn officers	115	176	+53.0%
911 calls per sworn officer	588	595	+1.2%
Average response time for Priority 1* calls, in minutes	3.54	4.37	+24.0%
Uniform crime reports—modified index of Part I crimes**	5,015	7,799	+56.0%

*Priority 1 = Imminent threat to life

**Homicide, rape, assault, burglary

Source: VPD's 2002 business plan

equipment. In addition to the growth projected within the city limits, future annexations will require a proportionate increase in police personnel, equipment, and facilities to maintain minimum standards. Because the East Precinct (generally east of I-205) will likely experience the greatest growth from annexations in the next six to ten years, planning has already begun on locating and sizing a new precinct facility.

Table 5-22 shows estimates of facility needs and cost over the next several years, based on projected staffing and program needs identified in VPD's 2002 business plan. General fund dollars are generated from property taxes and sales taxes. State and federal matching grant dollars are used primarily for special programs and new officer training.

Table 5-21. Officers needed within Vancouver's current city limits, 2009 and 2023.

	2003	2009	2023
Population within Vancouver's 2003 city limits	150,700*	163,665 (projected)	176,630 (projected)
Number of officers needed, based on ratio of officers per 1,000 people			
Under Vancouver's current ratio of 1.2	181	196	212
Under FBI's recommended ratio of 1.6	241	262	283

*OFM (2003)

Table 5-22. VPD capital facilities plan.

Year	Description	Amount	Funding source
2005	East Precinct building	\$6,850,000	General Fund
2006	Central Precinct building	\$7,500,000	General Fund
2007	Evidence facility	\$4,000,000	General Fund
2008	New Headquarters building land	\$1,500,000	General Fund
2009	New Headquarters building	\$3,000,000	General Fund
6-Year Plan Total		\$22,850,000	
Beyond 2009	West Precinct land and building	\$9,500,000	General Fund

Solid waste facilities and services

Counties and cities in the State of Washington are required by RCW 70.95 to:

- prepare and maintain coordinated comprehensive solid waste management plans
- determine the nature and extent of various solid waste streams (for example, from households, industries, offices, etc.)
- establish management strategies for the handling, utilization, and disposal of solid waste and identify waste reduction, source-separated recycling, and waste separation programs as priority management tools

All cities and towns in Clark County have delegated responsibility for solid waste transfer and disposal planning to the County through 2011.

The adopted Clark County Solid Waste Management Plan (CSWMP) of 2000 is updated regularly and reviewed by the County Solid Waste Advisory Commission. Agreements between Clark County and its cities commit each to the plan and to the plan's waste disposal system. Vancouver is responsible for managing collection services within its boundaries.

Clark County and the City of Vancouver entered into a 20-year contract with Columbia Resource Company (CRC) in 1992 to recycle solid-waste materials collected and delivered to transfer and recycling stations, with the remaining non-recycled wastes transported for final disposal to CRC's Finley Buttes Land-fill 180 miles upriver in Morrow County, Oregon. The two existing in-county transfer and recycling stations (Central Transfer and Recycling Station and West Vancouver Materials Recovery Center) are designed to handle a maximum of 676,000 tons of solid waste per year. There is room for expansion. Waste is



compacted into intermodal containers and transported upriver by private barge, then trucked to the landfill.

In 2002, approximately 225,000 tons of waste were handled through the two facilities. Original design capacities for the two transfer stations indicated they could handle up to 438,000 tons per year of solid waste. The current system was designed to have the flexibility to respond to changes in population and economic growth and in the behavior of residential and non-residential waste generators.

Vancouver's solid waste collection in 2003

Local garbage pickup service in Vancouver is provided by private companies under long-term contracts with the City. The east side is serviced by Waste Connections, Inc., and the west side is serviced by Waste Management of Vancouver. Weekly curbside recycling is provided on the same day garbage is picked up. Curbside yard debris collection is available every other week as an optional service for residents.

The County's recycling rate in 2000 was estimated to be 31 percent—from a total of 439,313 tons of solid waste, 135,000 tons were

recycled. This figure does not include diversion of wood waste, used motor oil, tires, aggregate, and so on, which are not included under Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) methodology. Total county diversion rate for 2000 is estimated to be 51.8 percent (Clark County Solid Waste Management Plan, 2000).

In a regional environmental protection effort, the County and cities accept up to 25 gallons of household hazardous wastes (solvents, paints, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, batteries and other chemicals) free of charge on two designated days each week at both the Central Transfer and the West Van Centers, and on limited days each month at Philip Services in Washougal.

Service standards

Since 1994, daily waste generation per person in Clark County has risen from 2.35 to 2.62 pounds. Ongoing efforts to educate the public about reducing waste may help minimize the rate of waste generation, but nationally the per capita rate is steadily increasing. Current per capita waste generation nationally is about 1 ton per person per year (including residential, commercial, and industrial disposed and recycled



waste). It is difficult to determine Clark County's overall waste generation rate because of the proximity to the Portland metro area and its disposal facilities and recycling plants, some of which are operated by the same firms that serve the County. If County facilities reach capacity, the County may have the option to limit some metro waste that is being delivered to the County's transfer stations.



Photo by Ed Vidinghoff

Direction for the future

Together, CTR and the West Van transfer and recycling facilities have sufficient capacity to handle the volume of waste projected to be generated within Clark County over the next 20 years. In fact, either facility is designed to handle the entire projected year 2011 flow of municipal solid waste produced in Clark County (CSWMP, 2000) in the event an emergency (such as a flood) shuts down one facility.

The existing solid waste management system has the capacity to accommodate all expected growth. However, in the interest of the long-term health of the system, the City will continue to develop waste reduction measures and encourage additional recycling.

Schools

Education in the VUGA is provided by public and private schools. The Vancouver, Evergreen and Camas Schools Districts provide primary education, and Clark College and Washington State University at Vancouver (WSU-V) provide secondary education. In addition, Vancouver is home to two state institutions for the disabled:

Washington School for the Deaf and Washington School for the Blind. All are affected by City population growth and land use decisions. **Figure 5-17** on page 5-52 shows the public school districts and public school facilities (including colleges and universities) serving Vancouver in 2003.

Vancouver's schools in 2003

Primary and secondary education. The impacts of projected growth on schools in the VUGA are addressed in the *Clark County Comprehensive Plan* (2003). This section addresses school districts in the City of Vancouver. The City of Vancouver is served primarily by the Vancouver and Evergreen School Districts. The Camas School District serves a small area of the city near Fisher's Swale. **Table 5-23** on page 5-53 compares enrollment and number of schools in 1993-94, 2002-03, 2009 and 2023 (projected).

The GMA includes schools in the public facilities and services category. School districts have adopted capital facilities plans to satisfy the requirements of GMA and to identify additional school facilities necessary to meet the needs of

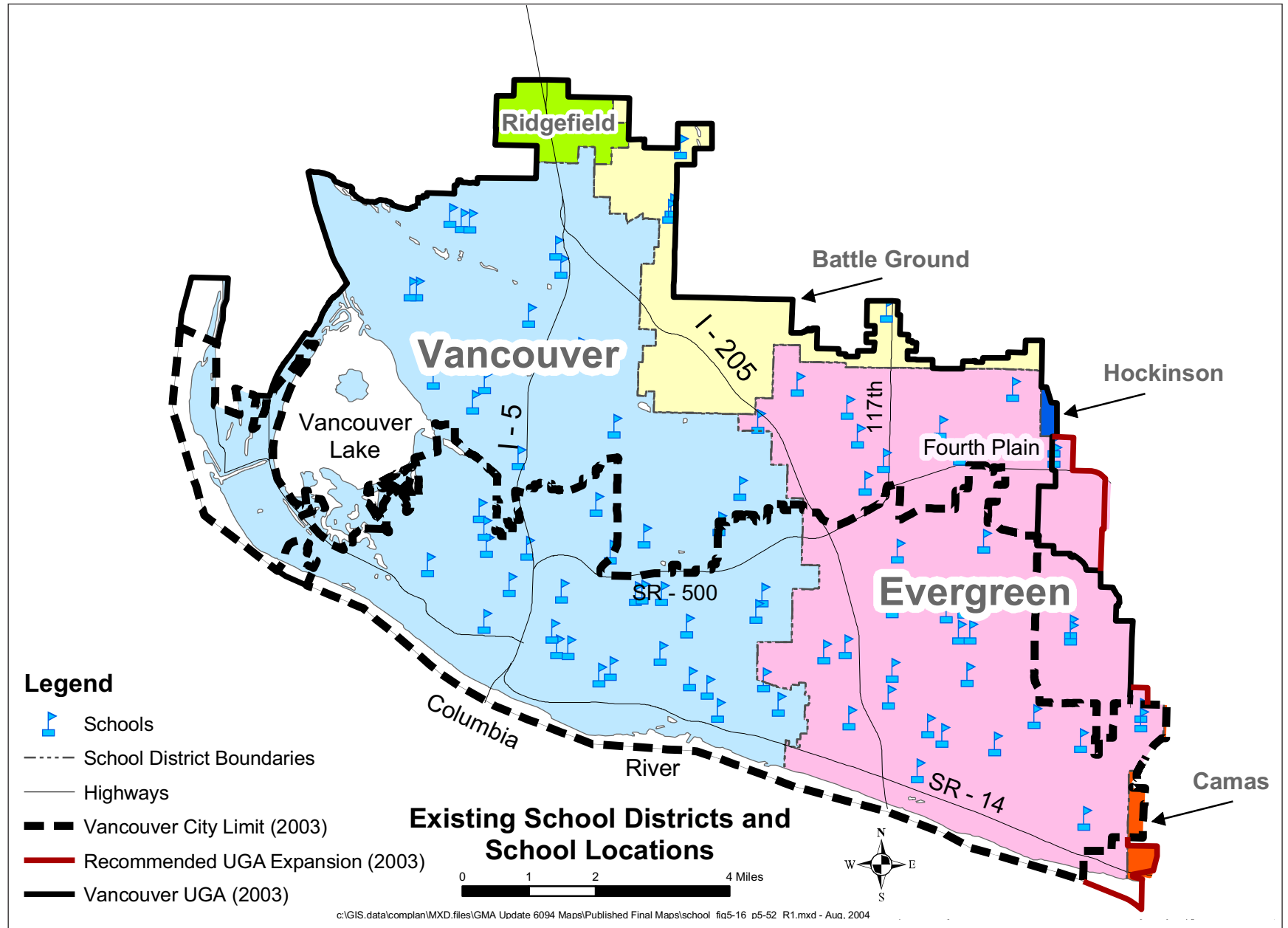


Figure 5-17. Existing school districts and school locations. Source: City of Vancouver GIS.

Table 5-23. School enrollment and facilities, 1993 to 2023.

Enrollment	Vancouver	Evergreen	Camas
1993-94	18,552	16,530	2,596
2002-03	21,869	23,727	4,299
2009	23,873	28,374	5,710
2023 (projected)	29,200	28,500*	NA
Number of schools			
1993-94	30	20	5
2002-03	33	30	7
2009	36	35	9

*2023 estimate based on build-out within parameters of current UGA and zoning designations.

Sources: *Draft Environmental Impact Statement—Clark County Growth Management Plan Update* (2003); *Clark County GMA Plan Resource Document* (1993); 2003 and 2009 data provided by each school district.

anticipated growth in student populations planned for their districts. School districts plan on a shorter cycle than GMA—typically forecasting only five to ten years in advance. Also, state funding for school construction is restricted by state law. New capacity (new schools or classrooms) can be added only when enrollment numbers justify it.

To determine the capacity of school facilities and need for expansion, each district sets planning standards that reflect both local goals and state mandates. School facility and student capacity needs are dictated by the types and amounts of space required to accommodate each district's educational program. The components that affect space needs include grade configuration (K-5 vs. K-6, for example), optimum facility size for different types of schools, class size (which can be affected by union contracts), types of educational programs (some require special facilities), and needs of the population (e.g., handicapped, non-English-speaking). Some factors are beyond the control or influence of the district.

Table 5-24 shows the classroom size planning standards used by the three school districts in their six-year capital facilities plan (2003-2009) to accommodate projected enrollment growth during this period. Classroom size could change in the future, however, based on the factors discussed above. Such change would be reflected in the next capital facilities plan update.

Colleges and universities

Clark College. Clark Community College District No. 14 serves residents of Clark, Skamania and west Klickitat counties. The college is located on an 80-acre campus in Vancouver's Central Park. The college offers a two-year associate of arts degree, and works in cooperation with WSU-V to provide bachelor of arts degrees for those who wish to continue their education.

Enrollment has expanded from 4,800 in the 1950s and 1960s to 8,000 by the end of the 1970s. In 2003, Clark College is the second largest community college in the state, serving a total of 24,969 students of all ages in credit and non-credit classes. Enrollment is related to population growth in the region and the demand from local employers for skilled workers. During the 1990s, the growth in high-tech industries in the county fueled growth in Clark College enrollment.

Washington State University at Vancouver. WSU at Vancouver is a campus of the state's land grant institution, offering upper-level courses

Table 5-24. Targeted classroom size, 2003 to 2009.

	Vancouver	Evergreen	Camas
Kindergarten to 3rd grade	20	25	23
4th and 5th grades	24	25	26
6th grade	25/26	30	29
7th to 12th grade	28/29	30	29
Special education	10-15	10-15	N/A
Other: Resource rooms, learning support centers, and music, art, and dance programs. All schools have computer training.			

(junior and senior) toward baccalaureate and graduate degrees in several fields. Many students transfer from Clark College to complete their college education. Current enrollment is approximately 1,800 students.

Other institutions

Washington School for the Deaf. WSD provides educational services to Washington students ages 3 to 21 who are deaf or hard-of-hearing. WSD operates from a 17-acre site with an adjacent 11-acre playing field. Enrollment at WSD fluctuates annually between 100 and 200. In 2001-2002, the enrollment was 113.

WSD provides both residential and day programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing students from around the state. WSD is in the process of redesigning its aging facilities to meet current needs. New residential cottages were completed in 1999 and the renovation of Clarke Hall (an older dormitory) was completed in 2002.

Washington State School for the Blind. WSSB is a fully accredited residential K-12 school for blind and partially sighted students from all over Washington. This state-supported institution is located on East 13th Street near Clark College and the Southwest Washington Medical Center. WSSB provides assistance, advice and best practices for educators in other school districts with blind or partially sighted students as well as providing education to the over 1,400 students enrolled at the Vancouver campus.

Direction for the future

Primary and secondary education. All three districts expect to continue to grow and will therefore need to add new facilities. To cover the local share of the new facilities, each district has decided to ask the cities they serve and Clark County to impose school impact fees, as allowed under the GMA and local implementing ordinances. The maximum allowable impact fee is calculated according to an adopted formula.

Table 5-25. School impact fees.

	Vancouver	Evergreen	Camas
Single-family unit			
Allowed by formula	\$2,218	\$4,411	\$3,259
Adopted	\$1,725	\$3,540	\$2,500
Multi-family unit			
Allowed by formula	\$2,134	\$2,891	\$3,683
Adopted	\$1,450	\$2,280	\$1,000

Source: Capital facility and impact fee data provided by each school district (2003).

However, none of the school districts serving the Vancouver urban area has elected to impose the maximum fee allowed by the formula (**Table 5-25**).

As more development takes place in the VUGA, large parcels of land available for schools will become increasingly scarce. School districts try to purchase land in advance, based on growth trends, but this is sometimes difficult to do with limited funding. As a result, districts renovate and make more efficient use of existing facilities when possible.

Vancouver School District. In 1988, the Vancouver School District embarked on a long-range planning process for capital improvement projects. The improvements were grouped into three phases. Phase I (1990 bond issue of \$45 million) and Phase II (1994 bond issue of \$135 million) are essentially complete. Phase III (2001 bond issue of \$87.7 million) improvements are underway.

The Phase III funded projects are:

- six elementary schools replaced
- two elementary schools expanded
- one new middle school constructed
- Columbia River High stadium and field site improved
- Jim Parsley Center remodeled
- district maintenance facility replaced

Identified Phase III projects not yet fully funded are:

- modernization of the School of Arts and Academics
- replacement of an elementary school

Construction of two additional elementary schools is likely to be needed to accommodate growth, but these have not yet been included in a bond issue or fully funded.

When the capital facilities improvements are completed, the Vancouver School District will have the capacity to house all but approximately 500 of the projected district-wide K-12 student enrollment growth. There are not sufficient students in any age group to justify a new school, and the students can be accommodated at existing school sites in modular units.

Evergreen School District. Evergreen School District projects three new elementary schools, one new middle school, and one new high school will be needed to meet the established level of service over the next six years. In addition, the district expects to acquire sites for two additional elementary schools, a new middle school, and a new high school. To meet short-term need, the district expects to purchase ten new portable classrooms per year over the next six years. Total cost of the facilities is \$130.1 million.

Camas School District. To house the additional 461 elementary students projected over the next six years, the district may reconfigure grades rather than acquire a site and build a new school. If grades are reconfigured, the district expects to add permanent high school classrooms and facilities to accommodate the increased enrollment. To accommodate expected growth, Camas School District is opening a new high school in the fall of 2003 that has a capacity for 1,600 students. The total cost of the new school is \$44.5 million.

Camas School District also expects to modernize and renovate existing schools at a cost of approximately \$10 million. To accommodate growth in the short term, the district may purchase and utilize portable classrooms.

Colleges and universities

Clark College. Clark College is preparing a master plan for facility development. Funding for implementation of the plan will come from the state, from tuition, and from grants and donations.

Washington State University at Vancouver. WSU-V completed a master plan in 1993 (adopted by the County in 1995) to guide growth and development of the campus in the Salmon Creek area of the VUGA, northeast of the I-5/I-205 interchange. The plan envisions creating a broader range of educational offerings, including four years of undergraduate instruction as well as advanced degrees, particularly in science and engineering. This is in response to the continued growth and demand for educated workers from industries in southwest Washington.

Other institutions. Enrollment at both the Washington School for the Deaf and the Washington State School for the Blind is expected to remain at about current levels for the next six years.

Library services

Vancouver's library system in 2003

The Fort Vancouver Regional Library District (FVRLD) provides library services in four counties in southwestern Washington (Clark, Skamania, Klickitat, and the City of Woodland in Cowlitz). The FVRLD serves a total population of 385,000 and an area of 4,200 square miles. The FVRLD's service area includes the VUGA.

The district's central library is the Vancouver Community Library in Central Park. Built in 1963, this library is the largest in the district with more than 260,000 books. The library also provides support services to the other libraries in the district.

In the VUGA, there are four libraries including the central library. **Table 5-26** lists their ages and sizes.

Table 5-26. The four libraries in the VUGA: age and size.

Libraries in VUGA	Year built	Square feet
Vancouver Community Library	1963	36,000
Vancouver Mall Community Library	1983	7,200
Cascade Park Community Library	1996	2,500
Three Creeks Community Library (outside city limits)	2002	13,000
Total		58,700

Service standards

The amount of public library space a community needs is often based on the ratio of library space to population. In a 1996 study commissioned by the FVRLD, 0.5 square feet of library space per person was the recommended ratio. In 2002, based on an estimated population of 148,800 and total library space of 58,700 square feet, the City of Vancouver's library space per person was 0.31 square feet. The 2002 ratio for the entire VUGA, based on an estimated population of 256,000, was 0.23 square feet per person.

Direction for the future

The 20-year Library Capital Facilities Plan, adopted in January 2003, would increase the per person library space to at least the recommended level, based on the projected populations listed in Table 1-4. Library space in the VUGA would increase from the current 58,700 square feet to between 172,000 and 189,000 square feet. Per capita space in the city would increase from 0.31 square feet to 0.87 square feet, and from 0.23 to 0.57 square feet in the entire VUGA. The plan is divided into three phases. Most of the new space would be added in Phase 1, scheduled to be completed by 2009.

FVRLD's operating funds come

from property taxes, fees, and donations. Increased demand for library services can be addressed by constructing new facilities, and adding creative outreach programs and satellite service points. Funding for new facilities requires bond approval by district residents.

Phase 1: 6-year plan. A \$48 million bond measure for Phase 1 on the ballot in early 2004 failed to get voter approval. FVRLD is considering other ways to meet identified needs.

New Vancouver Community Library (Main Library).

This facility is the operational center of the district, providing district-wide reference services, a strong reference collection, a large book collection, and technology resources. A proposed remodel and expansion, or replacement, of the existing building would create a new facility of 92,000 square feet at an estimated cost of \$34 million.

Replace existing Cascade Park Community Library.

The existing library of 2,500 square feet is inadequate to serve the needs of its approximately 42,000-person service area. The existing space ratio is 0.06 square foot per person, which would increase to 0.6 square foot per person



Table 5-27. Summary of library capital facilities plan projects.

New VUGA space	104,300 to 134,300 square feet
Total VUGA space to be constructed	137,000 to 167,000 square feet
New district operations center space	40,000 to 48,000 square feet
Cost estimate in 2002 dollars	\$67.3 million to \$70.8 million

with the 25,000 replacement facility proposed as part of the planned new Firstenburg Community Center. The cost of this replacement facility is estimated to be \$9 million.

District Operations Center. This facility is in the central library, supplemented by leased space. Expansion or replacement of the central library, as described above, would displace the current operations center. A consolidated 40,000 to 48,000 square foot operations center at a new location is proposed and estimated to cost \$5 million.

Phase 2: 7-10 year plan

New Vancouver Mall/Orchards Community Library. The Vancouver Mall Community Library is in 7,200 square feet of leased space within the Westfield Shoppingtown Vancouver. A new facility is proposed to serve the Vancouver Mall/Orchards area. Given the unique location of the current library, it may be possible to maintain the existing space and construct a companion facility outside the mall but nearby. Total size would be 20,000 to 25,000 square feet and would likely cost \$7 million to \$8.75 million.

New Hazel Dell Community Library. The Vancouver Community Library and the new Three Creeks Community Library north of Salmon Creek currently serve the Hazel Dell area south of Salmon Creek. An additional service facility of approximately 15,000 square feet and an estimated cost

of \$5.25 million will eventually be needed to provide better accessibility to current residents and serve population growth.

Phase 3: 10-20 year plan

Northeast Community Library. This phase would consist of constructing a new library with 20,000 to 25,000 square feet in the northeastern part of the VUGA. This area will see significant growth over the next 20 years with the proposed 192nd Avenue improvements and its new interchange at State Route (SR) 14. The new library is estimated to cost \$7 million to \$8.75 million.

Table 5-27 is a summary of library capital facilities plan projects.



General government

In addition to administrative offices for City services already discussed, a variety of administrative, support and planning services are housed in City Hall, the Citizen Service Center, the Esther Short Building, several community centers and operations facilities, and some leased space as needed (**Figure 5-18**). In addition, the City's Transportation Planning staff is housed in the new County Public Service building in order to coordinate with countywide transportation planning efforts.

In 1999, as part of a space-needs study, the City projected a possible 80 percent increase in City staff through 2010 (not including police, fire, and operations staff), based on assumptions regarding implementation of the Annexation Blueprint, population growth, development, and technological considerations. Even with modest growth, the City will need more administrative



Figure 5-18. Existing major Vancouver facilities. Source: City of Vancouver GIS.

office and support space than it occupies today. The 1999 space-needs study found that both owned and leased space occupied by the City was often ill-matched to departmental needs. Consolidation of most City functions into a single downtown location, and a possible eastern satellite facility, matching space provision to actual needs, should provide better and more efficient public service.

Although there are no specific plans to find or build a consolidated building in downtown Vancouver in the next six years, guidelines for such a facility have been identified, with a goal of fostering mixed-use development in or adjacent

to any new City facility, and making a contribution to the revitalization of Downtown Vancouver. Serious consideration is also being given to providing more convenient government access to citizens in the eastern areas of the City (mostly annexed in 1997) by establishing a satellite citizen service facility, possibly in conjunction with the new Firstenburg Community Center being developed on 136th Avenue by the VCPRD. For now, the major capital investment focus will be on functional remodeling and major maintenance of existing general government facilities.

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